GROWING GLADIOLUS FOR MARKET

By George S. Woobruff, Iow

The great improvement of recent years in the gladiolus is remarkable because of the fact that this flower has been cultivated for about a hundred years. There are about 140 species, of which some 15 are of European and West Asian origin, a few have been discovered on the mountains of tropical Africa, but practically all our garden strains are from the South African species, variously hybridized.

I think none of the original species are in cultivation in this country unless, possibly, in botanical gardens, as all those offered for sale are the results of many crosses.

About 17 years ago H. H. Groff of Ontario, Canada, being dissatisfied with existing strains, set out to build up, by hand crossing and selection, a strain which would have large and handsome flowers, "substance" or body of petals and especially vigor of constitution.

Many of the then existing varieties were "in-bred" and were weak. Some named sorts were selling at $1 to $3 a bulb and yet were very unproductive. He has used all strains available, including the whole of Burbank's California, and has produced a collection of 15,000 varieties, showing the result of the many types used in their production by the wonderful variety in form, size, habit of growth, coloring and especially in the remarkable vigor and productiveness of many of the

The Modern Gladiolus.

sorts.

The gladiolus is propagated by direct fultiplacition by cormels, and by seeds. The corm planted dies at the end of the season but produces a new one at the base of each shoot it sends up; so that the rapidity of multiplication depends on the number of shoots sent up.

When the corms are dug in the fall a number of bulblets or "cormels" are found attached to them. Some sorts have very few and some a great many, especially those having the Lemoine "blood." These cormels produce the same kind as the corms they are taken from and flower in the second or third year from planting—rarely the first year.

When seeds are sown they will produce hardly two sorts alike, and many will not be worth keeping, but there may be some fine new sorts. The seedlings will flower the second or third year.

It is much more satisfactory to buy the "cream" of other people's's seedlings than to fill the garden with a lot of poor sorts.

Plant in full sunshine, but not against the south side of a wall, and away from the roots of trees, in well prepared soil, a mellow, sandy loam preferred, and one retentive of moisture.

Avoid contact with manure which should never be fresh and had better be plowed in the previous season or in the fall.

Occasionally restore potash to the soil in some form as for potatoes. If the soil be stiff or clayey put sandy loam in the furrow.

Plant in furrows three to five inches deep, according to the size of the corms, and the quality of the soil, and at intervals of, say two weeks, from the time the ground will work well up to July.

By this means and by the difference in earliness of varieties, flowers may be had from July until hard frost. It is most important that the ground be kept stirred and mellow at all times, especially as soon after each rain as the ground will work well and before a crust forms.

Unless you have planted in masses for landscape effect, cut every stem as soon as the first two or three flowers open and let the buds develop in water in the house. Every morning remove the old flowers shorten the stems and change the water. Keep at night in a cool place.

Thus treated the stems will be in bloom a week or more.

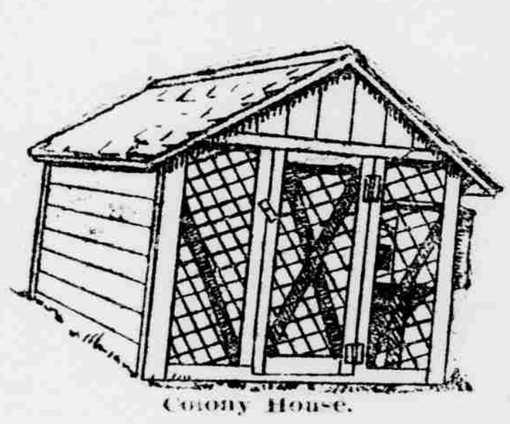
If a few specially large flowers are wanted pinch off some of the top buds at the start.

About watering. In my fields, cultivation has to take the place of watering, but where water is to be had, and when needed, it is a good thing if done thoroughly in the first stages of growth and again when the flower buds show color. A good soaking at the latter period makes the flowers larger.

AN OREGON COLONY HOUSE.

This house is 10x14 feet placed on runners which act as side sills; they are beveled at both ends.

This siding is nailed flush at top of plate and laps three inches on the runners. There are five pairs of raft-



Colony House.

ers and the roof boards are 1-inch-by-3-inch material, set three inches apart, and the roof is shingled five inches to the weather.

The nest platform is two feet from the ground, well braced and is 5 feet long by 22 inches wide.

The nests are made of 5-gallon oil-cans, the top and part of front being cut out; 2 inches of the lower part is left to keep the nest material in, and a small slit at the top which acts as a brace. A sloping board is placed above the nests to keep the chickens from standing on them, and it also adds to the darkness.

The perches are made of 3-inch material, set flat. They are level, and 12 inches from the dropping-board in front.

The cost of material, all of which is new, including lumber, hardware, and plaint, does not exceed $18.

AN OLD BREED OF CHICKENS.

The Brown Red Games have been known as far back as poultry has been known.

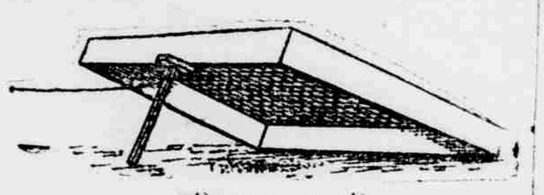
The breast plumage of both male and female of this variety is laced with lemon shading. Like the others of this breed, the Brown Red Games carry their tails in an almost upright position, which gives them the appearance of stiltiness. While this breed is useful, the commercial value of the fowls is so limited as to exclude them from general cultivation.

Destroying English Sparrows.

In its economic relations the English sparrow among birds is comparable to the rat among mammals. It is cunning, destructive, and filthy. This sparrow was introduced into America about sixty years ago, and is now distributed generally over the eastern half of the United States and southern Canada and locally westward to the Pacific coast. This rapid dissemination is a result of the bird's hardiness, extraordinary fecundity, diversity of food, aggressive disposition, and almost complete immunity from natural enemies through its sagacity and its preference for thickly settled communities.

Its natural diet consists of seeds, but it eats a great variety of other

foods. While much of its annual fare consists of waste material from the streets, in autumn an winter it con-

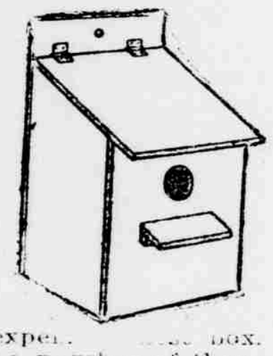


A Sparrow Trap.

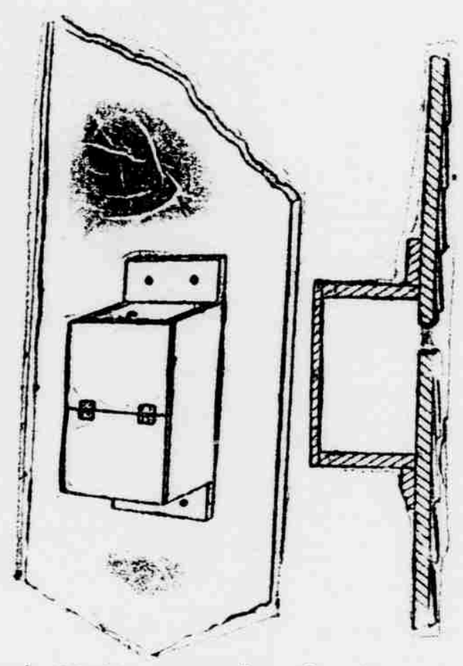
A very effective method of getting rid of many of the birds, especially after a snowfall. Set the trap over bait and pull the cord from a sheltered point of observation.

sumes quantities of weed seed, and in summer numerous insects. The destruction of weed seed is undeniably in the sparrow's favor. Its record as to insects is not so clear. There is substantial evidence that it eats certain harmful insects quite freely when these are abundant, but that it habitually seeks insects, or that it prefers them to seeds or other vegetable food, is not borne out by the evidence.

The sparrow destroys small fruits, as cherries [illegible] pears and peaches.



An inexpen[illegible] box. By distributing a number of these about orchards, shade trees, and out-buildings, and catching the sparrows that occupy them, or by destroying eggs, the work of extermination may be carried on at a season when other methods are least effective.



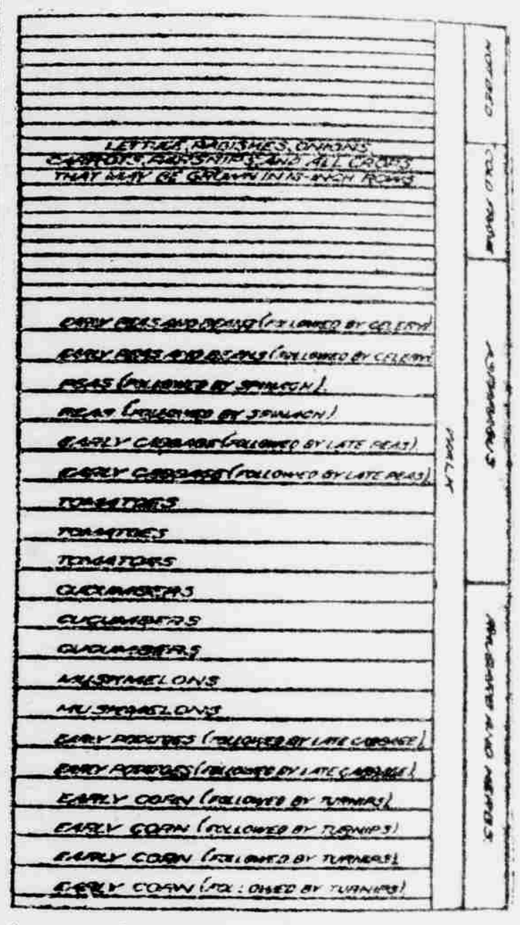
A nesting box for the interior of old buildings. Through an opening in the back the eggs may be removed or the birds caught.

It also destroys buds and flowers of cultivated trees, shrubs, and vines. In the garden it eats seeds as they ripen, and nips off tender young vegetables as they appear above ground, peas and lettuce being especially subject to attack. It damages wheat and other grains when newly sowed, ripening, and in shocks. It reduces the numbers of some of our most useful native species, such as bluebirds, house wrens, purple martins, tree swallows, cliff swallows, and barn swallows, by destroying the eggs and young and by usurping the nesting places. It attacks other familiar native birds, as the robin, wren, red-eyed vireo, catbird, and mocking bird, causing them to desert parks and shady streets of towns. Unlike our native birds whose places it usurps, it has no song, but is noisy and vituperative, defiles buildings and ornamental trees, shrubs, and vines with its excrement and with its bulky nests.

The most effective method of preventing the increase of sparrows in a locality is to destroy their nests at intervals of ten or twelve days throughout the breeding season. Occasionally they build large covered nests in trees, but as a rule they build open nests in bird houses, electric-light hoods, cornices, waterspouts, and similar places. While it is often difficult to reach nests with the hand, they can usually be torn down by means of a long pole having an iron hook at the tip. By a concerted and continued movement to destroy every nest after the eggs are laid, English sparrows in any locality may be gradually reduced without resorting to shot or poison.

PLANNING A GARDEN.

It is a grave mistake to suppose that a garden plot will go on forever raising the same vegetables. Even

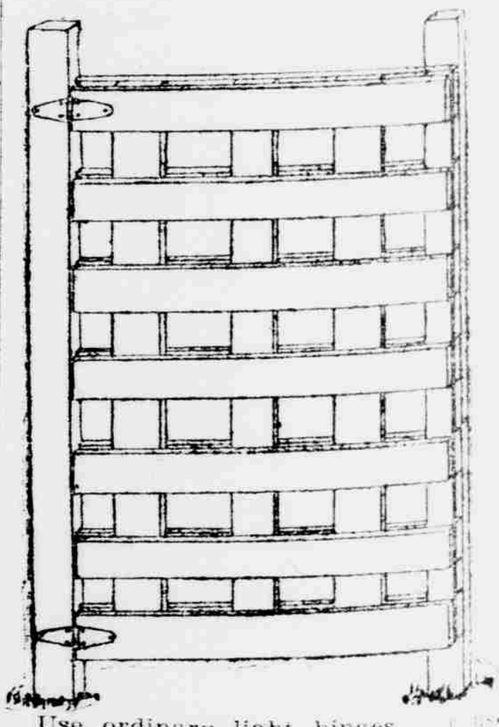


have only a small plot of ground it is impossible to move our garden bodily, but we can change our vegetables to another part of this little plot—and where we planted peas and beans last year plant lettuce this year.

A GOOD FARM GATE.

Take board strips one inch thick, three inches broad and the proper length and width you want your gate, nail them across each other as shown in the illustration, making about three inch cracks.

Then take the same size and width pieces and double the crosses nailing securely. A half pound of No. 8 nails will do the work.



Use ordinary light hinges. I use seven cross pieces, and then by doubling these, which is absolutely necessary, you will have to use fourteen, with four pieces lengthwise, making a total of eighteen pieces. This makes a cheap and very durable gate. In making the latch, use any convenient method.

BURDINE WEEK

"Did you ever hear of the Rhode County hams? I have. And now the Methodist folks of Pastor Grant's charge have got together and sent us about forty of the genuine sort—and a few shoulders thrown in. But let nobody be uneasy—we've got enough force to take care of them up here."